

## **Identify the Potentials to Develop Yoga Tourism with Special Reference to Western Province**

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Currently, yoga tourism has become a new trend around the world and there are more than 300 million yoga practitioners in the world. When consider the Sri Lankan context Yoga tourism is not much popular. The research study aimed to identify the potentials to develop yoga tourism in Western province. Qualitative and quantitative methods were adopted to gather data by using data collection methods of self-administrative questionnaires and structured interviews. The population of the study was international Yoga tourists who visit the western province as well as yoga instructors and in-charge person of the Yoga centre/hotel. The convenience sampling technique was used and 50 yoga tourists, 10 yoga establishments' in charge person/ yoga operators, and 10 yoga instructors were interviewed. Factor analysis and content analysis were used to analyse quantitative and qualitative data and SWOT analysis were used to identify the potentials. To identify potentials for yoga tourism in the Western province the profile of the yoga tourists, yoga tourists' expectation and behaviour, current situation of yoga centers/yoga centers in the hotel, competencies of yoga instructors were evaluated. The results of the study showed that the most influenced factor to do yoga was yoga program and competency of yoga instructors. And the Western province has good yoga establishments and there are experienced and qualified yoga instructors. All findings reflected that Western province has huge potentials for yoga tourism as a new tourism market. It is recommended that the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority should establish a legal procedure to register and introduce standards and guidelines for yoga centers and yoga instructors to promote yoga, and also to enhance the contribution of yoga instructors towards to promote yoga and promote yoga tourism with Ayurveda department.

*Keywords:* Spiritual tourism, Wellness tourism